

Public Works Committee Minutes 4/6/2010

Present: Steve Braun (Chair), Mike Cann, Rob Crowner (Vice-Chair), Don George, Guilford Mooring (Superintendent, DPW), Charlie Moran, Vince O'Connor. Visitor: Janet Keller.

1. Administrative

a: Review/Approve minutes of 3/2/2010. Minutes of 3/2/2010 Approved 6-0-0.

b: Set next meeting date: Tuesday, May 4.

2. Updates

Superintendent Mooring reported that on Rte 116 signs are up, work is not yet underway. Asphalt plants just opening up. No ETA. Plans to take off 1 1/4 inches, replace 1 1/2, and mill around structures. A couple of places where road has failed and will be completely replaced. He described a cause of ring failures: asphalt & iron expand/contract at different rates. To mitigate this, around ring structures DPW uses "modified top" with 1/2 inch stone, which packs better than regular top, with its 3/4 inch stone.

3. New Business

a: Implications of override votes on DPW and capital funding. Guilford Mooring reported that there would be no layoffs; there would not have been any layoffs until November in any case. Charlie Moran noted that it was very unlikely that the major bond issue for catching up on roadwork would happen this year, even with the override. There were no funds in the override for capital projects. Guilford Mooring noted that there might be \$100K additional for roads from the general fund if the Dispatch Center is regionalized. Vince O'Connor suggested that we use Chapter 90 funds to pay bond principal/interest. Guilford Mooring stated that this practice was illegal in the state.

b: Review of streets to be paved in 2010 with Chapter 90 funds: Gaylord; Spring Street; University Big Y intersection; south end of Sand Hill (Puffer Circle to Pine). (This is the worst part of Sand Hill Road). Perhaps overlay for rest of section. Dana Street. Charlie Moran has the Committee's permission to alert Dana Street residents to the fact that their street is on the list.

c: Vince O'Connor proposed that on all "ladder" streets (i.e. those connecting Rt. 9 and Amity/Main streets), have their speed limit reduced to 25 mph. Guilford Mooring noted that this was not in the Town's power. One could post "thickly settled" signs on streets, because the presence of these signs technically lowers the speed limit from 30 to 25 mph, but the sign cannot say "25 mph." Vince: change speed limit to 25 mph. Guilford: you can't change speed limits. Local road: 30 mph. If we post Thickly Settled signs, that would drop the limit to 25. We can do this when houses are less than 200 ft apart. Rob Crowner asked whether DPW can make this decision. Guilford Mooring said that DPW would have to survey the streets and take a recommendation to the Select Board. He noted that signs cost \$200 each, and often disappear and require replacement.

Vince O'Connor **Moved:** to recommend to the Select Board that for ladder streets between Amity and Main, Rte 9 & College Streets, "Thickly Settled" signs be posted on entry to all streets. Moved and seconded.

Charlie Moran suggested that we do signs only on ladder roads that are repaved, rather than getting ahead of ourselves and putting signs on all ladder streets this year.

Motion withdrawn.

It was agreed that Vince would check with the Town's police about the enforcement of the "Thickly Settled" 25 mph speed limit.

Vince O'Connor reported a conversation he had with a Sand Hill Road resident who told Vince that he was OK with an easement as long as road isn't widened. This same resident had said something quite different to Superintendent Mooring. Superintendent Mooring noted that if Sand Hill residents kept changing their minds about where the road should go, he could not proceed with the road work this year. Mr. Mooring noted that he had received 20 emails that day in reference to the work on Sand Hill Road. Most said fix the road or close it; the others simply said fix the road.

Vince O'Connor voiced concerns re: mailbox placement if sidewalks are created and/or rebuilt. Mailboxes on side of road opposite residence—where people have to cross the street to get their mail. In particular, he was concerned with six mailboxes on Belchertown Road. Guilford Mooring noted that this is a Post Office project. Mailbox placement is the purview of the Postmaster for Amherst.

Moved: That the Committee request that the Select Board and/or the Town Manager contact the Amherst Postmaster regarding the placement of mailboxes on Belchertown Road between East St. light & Fort River Bridge. Mailboxes should be moved to side of street where the residence is located. **Voted 4-2-0.**

Steve Braun will do a PWC report for Annual Town Meeting and send it to committee for approval.

4. Old Business: None

5. Announcements:

Monday night, 4-12-2010, Guilford Mooring will bring his proposed Project Development Process to the Select Board. Charlie Moran will represent PWC at this meeting.

The public hearing for the Eastman Lane/North Pleasant Street Conceptual Plan will be on the PWC agenda for the May 4 meeting.